

Appl. No. 10/656,137
Amendment dated October 13, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 15, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings includes a change to Figure 3. This sheet of Figure 3 replaces the original sheet of Figure 3.

Attachment: one (1) replacement sheet

REMARKS

In the June 15, 2005 Office Action, all of the claims remain rejected in view of prior art. No other objections or rejections are made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the June 15, 2005 Office Action, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections. However, Applicant has amended claims 1, 4 and 17 to further clearly state the scope of the invention. Thus, claims 1-22 are pending, with claims 1 and 17 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Interview Summary

On October 5, 2005, the undersigned conducted a personal interview with Examiner Emmanuel M. Marcelo, who is in charge of the above-identified patent application. Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Marcelo for the opportunity to discuss the above-identified patent application. During the interview, the Takahashi patent was discussed. It was agreed that the reel of Takahashi patent requires the cover portion 2 for the reel to be operable. It was also agreed that the Takahashi patent does not disclose four side plates or a decorative cover having the first and second cover members, contrary to the requirement of claim 17.

Drawings

Applicant has found an inadvertent error in Figure 3 upon review thereof. Accordingly, Applicant wishes to amend Figure 3 as provided in the attached replacement sheet. Since the structure illustrated in the amended Figure 3 is shown in Figure 2 as originally filed, Applicant believes that no new matter is being added by the amendment to Figure 3.

Specification

Applicant has amended the specification to provide better antecedent basis for the limitations of claim 1 as now amended. Applicant believes that the specification is correct and complies with 37 CFR §1.71 and §1.75(d)(1).

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

On page 2 of the June 15, 2005 Office Action, claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,601,246 to Takahashi ("Takahashi

patent”). In response, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejections of the Office Action.

More specifically, Applicant disagrees with the Office Action’s assertion that the spool and the spool drive mechanism of the Takahashi patent function in cooperation with each other without the side plate 2 being attached to the attachment frame.

As shown in Figures 11, 18, 23, and 26 and discussed in column 8, lines 1-3 and 14-16, the side plate 2 has a hook portion 2a that engages the pressure control lever 39, which is in pressure contact with one end 4b of the spool shaft 4. Clearly, when the side plate 2 is removed, the pressure control lever 39 loses the pressure contact with the spool shaft 4. Accordingly, the spool shaft 4 is no longer supported at the end 4b. With the pressure control lever 39 being disengaged from the end 4b of the spool shaft 4, there is nothing that keeps the engagement portion 4a of the spool 4 engaged with the engagement portion 7a of the pinion 7. Thus, the rotation of the handle *cannot* be transmitted to the spool 4. In other words, the spool 4 and the spool drive mechanism of the Takahashi patent *cannot* function in cooperation with each other when the side plate 2 is removed. This is clearly contrary to the requirement of claims 1 and 17.

Further regarding claim 17, Applicants believe that the Takahashi patent does not disclose or suggest *four* side plates that satisfy the requirement of claim 17. Furthermore, as discussed above, it was agreed during the interview on October 5, 2005 that the Takahashi patent does not show the four side plates required by claim 17. Thus, Applicants believe that the Takahashi patent does not disclose or suggest the arrangement of claim 17.

It is well settled under U.S. patent law that for a reference to anticipate a claim, the reference must disclose each and every element of the claim within the reference. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 17 are not anticipated by the prior art of record.

Furthermore, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 17 to further clarify the language of the claims. The new limitations are supported by Figures 4-7, 10-11, and 13-14 and the paragraphs beginning on page 14, line 17; page 14, line 27; page 15, line 1; page 15, line 29; and page 24, line 24 as originally filed. Applicants believe that claims 1 and 17 as amended above are not anticipated by the prior art of record.

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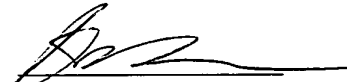
Moreover, Applicants believe that dependent claims 2-16 and 18-22 are also allowable over the prior art of record in that they depend from independent claims 1 and 17, and are therefore narrower. Claim 4 has been also amended to correct the grammatical error. Thus, Applicants believe that since the prior art of record does not anticipate independent claims 1 and 17, neither does the prior art anticipate dependent claims 2-16 and 18-22.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-22 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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